

Comments for the Environmental Management Commission on the Proposed New Rules for Jordan Lake

Note: I presented these comments at the public hearing on Jordan Lake Rules in Carrboro on July 12, 2007.

My name is Cynthia Crossen. I coordinate the Haw River Watch Project of the Haw River Assembly (HRA), teaching citizen teams throughout the watershed to monitor the water quality of their creek or the Haw River. These volunteers are dedicated to being watchdogs for their creeks, and to doing what they can to keep them clean. When they see problems, they let me know. I encourage and support them in reporting problems to the appropriate county and state officials. On behalf of HRA, I also post reported pollution problems on HRA's website, www.hawriver.org. (See <http://www.hawriver.org/index.php?topgroupid=&subgroupid=22&groupid=19> for some of these reports.)

My job gives me the opportunity to visit creeks all over the watershed, and see how they are doing first-hand. I work with the public to educate them about water quality issues. People are very concerned about the health of the watershed, as well as the Lake.

I have seen or heard about many instances of excess algal growth on many streams in our watershed. Some of these creeks are already designated as impaired on the state's 303-d list, such as North Buffalo Creek in Greensboro, Morgan Creek (which flows into the New Hope Arm of Jordan Lake), and Robeson Creek (which flows into the Haw River arm of the Lake). I have also gotten reports about excessive algae on some creeks that are not yet on the impaired list, such as Pokeberry Creek and Brooks Creek, the Haw River at Saxapahaw, the Haw River at Swepsonville, the Haw River in Bynum, and others.

I also get many concerns about the increasing sediment that we are seeing in our creeks. We need the new Jordan Lake rules to control stormwater and nutrient-carrying sediment, a big problem throughout the watershed as development increases everywhere.

I strongly urge you to adopt these proposed rules to clean up Jordan Lake, with the recommendation that nitrogen reductions from the major wastewater treatment plants must begin in 2011, as originally recommended, instead of 2016. It is imperative that we have strong rules to reduce the nutrients flowing into the Lake, and to control stormwater.

Our concern for problems on Jordan Lake, and the reports we were getting about disturbing algal blooms and other problems, led the Haw River Assembly to establish the Lake Watch program in 2006. We ask volunteers to report problems they see on the lake, such as algae blooms, fish kills, sediment plumes, and trash pile-ups. We also have a Bridge Watch network: volunteers who routinely drive across bridges over the Haw or the Lake report problems to us, and we call on them when we need to track a problem to its source. I can tell you—people care about the health of their watershed!

I would also ask you to consider, in addition to all its other many uses, the recreational swimming that Jordan Lake provides—an opportunity for all citizens to enjoy being in the water at the beautiful Jordan Lake. It is imperative that we keep the public swimming beaches clean and healthy for swimming.

The Haw River Assembly has worked with many children over the years, at Jordan Lake. For eight years, we led field trips for Alston Chapel Summer camp at Parker's Creek at Jordan Lake. The highlight of these trips for the children was their swimming time in the Lake. Their families do not belong to country clubs—this is the place they can come to enjoy swimming in a natural setting. HRA

also works with 4-H campers, and other campers, at the Lake. We swim with the children, and we wade at the shore with them, helping them to discover aquatic life. Jordan Lake is a public trust for these children and for all citizens, and we need to ensure that it is kept clean and healthy for recreational swimming, as well as its other many uses.



Alston Camp swimming 1



Alston Camp swimming 2



Alston Camp macroinvertebrate study 1



Alston Camp macro study 2



4-H camp at Jordan Lake

In conclusion: the Lake is a public trust that we are impelled and obligated to protect. Please adopt these proposed new rules so that we can clean up the Lake and keep it clean.

Thank you,
Cynthia Crossen
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